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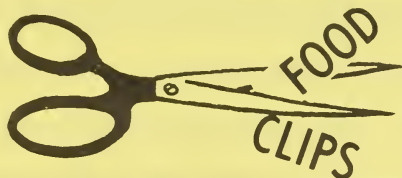
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Food and Home Notes

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In This Issue:

- 1 Unpeeled Potato Chips?
- 2 Consumer Reaction
- 3 -- on "blended beef"
- 4 Cost of Food at Home (Updated)

Have you ever heard of "Florence Fennel?" It is related to celery and celeriac and looks like an enlarged leafstalk.

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Physalis is a "miscellaneous" vegetable -- it's sometimes called a groundcherry or husk tomato. It's a yellow fruit about the size of a cherry, but resembling a tomato.

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Fresh coconuts in the shell retain good quality up to a month in the refrigerator according to marketing specialists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Shelled, blanched chestnuts (whole or chopped) may be frozen for longer storage. But, be sure to pack them in tightly closed freezer containers and freeze immediately at 0° F. or lower. They may be used in cooking without defrosting.

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POTATO CHIPS 'N' PEELS —a new look?

Potato chips -- fried with the peels intact -- may be a new item in the market place according to scientists at the Red River Valley Potato Research Center (Minn.) as reported by Agricultural Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Unpeeled potato chips probably are more nutritious -- many of the nutrients (in the potato) are found close to the peel. Appearance-wise the only difference is a "golden ring" on the unpeeled potato chips. Reactions from taste-testers were favorable because either peeled or unpeeled potatoes rated similar in flavor, appearance, and shelf-life. So why peel them at all?

Not peeling potatoes could eliminate one of the problem areas of processing -- and result in lower costs to the consumer. It would also eliminate disposal of the waste. The research, thus far, is still experimental and there are no potato chips with skins now in commercial production. But, may-be.

CONSUMER REACTION

If you're an "aware" consumer, you've either tried -- considered trying -- or rejected the "blended beef" (a ground beef product consisting of a blend of textured vegetable protein and freshly ground beef) which has entered the marketplace in quantity in many areas. The increase of beef prices in 1973 opened the door to more general use (for home-use) of the Textured Vegetable Protein (tvp)¹ which has been on the market for several years as a meat extender by the food service industry for use in restaurants and institutions. This "blended beef" helps to cut costs with little or no apparent reduction in quality if "tvp" is used at recommended levels.

A report put together from consumer interviews in 1973 by the Department of Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University, was just released through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research Service. More than 900 purchases of blended ground beef were considered in this personal and telephone household interview in the area of Dallas and Houston, Texas.

Ground beef -- which accounts for approximately 30 percent of all beef consumed -- is one of the most popular foods in the United States. Per capita consumption is nearly 34 pounds per year. This blended ground beef product was studied because widespread consumer acceptance could have important implications.

1 Lower case letter will be used here because TVP is a copyrighted trademark for textured vegetable protein which is the property of the Archer Daniels Midland Company, Decatur, Illinois. Use of the abbreviation "tvp" here simply refers to the generic product.

——to "blended beef"

Of the blended beef purchasers interviewed in Dallas, 91 percent reported using ground beef at least once a week. In Houston, 93 percent reported using it at least once per week. Of those in Houston, its use two or more times per week was somewhat more frequent than was reported in Dallas.

The overwhelming reason for purchasing blended ground beef is price, cited by 83 percent of the purchasers. Price differential ranged from 10 to 35 cents per pound when "blended" was compared to either regular hamburger or lean ground beef.

Taste wise -- it seems to be an excellent substitute for all-meat ground beef and hamburger, according to the report. Most consumers were either indifferent or expressed a preference for blended beef. Advantages of the blended ground beef were in lack of shrinkage, fatty taste, food value, and overall satisfaction. However, consumers preferred the color of regular ground beef -- the blended beef is paler before cooking.

Consumers are very calorie conscious according to survey results. Of the consumers interviewed, 56 percent felt that regular ground beef contained more calories, while approximately 20% said that blended beef had more. Approximately one-fourth felt that both contained the same calories.

'The general attitudes of respondents towards meat analogs (meat-like products made from non-meat foods) were quite favorable. Asked if they would like to try other meat-like products made up entirely of vegetable protein -- over 75% said they would; only 12 percent said they would not. (Others were undecided.)

In 1971 the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service approved the use of tvp at levels up to 30 percent in the School Lunch Program.

COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR A WEEK (June)

	<u>Low-Cost Plan</u>	<u>Moderate-Cost Plan</u>	<u>Liberal Plan</u>
Families			
Young couple.....	\$26.10	\$32.60	\$39.50
Elderly couple.....	21.10	26.90	32.00
Family of 4 with preschool children.....	37.60	47.00	56.50
Family of 4 with elementary school children.....	44.10	55.10	66.70
Individuals*			
Women			
20-34 years.....	10.90	13.60	16.20
35-54 years.....	10.40	13.10	15.60
55 years and over.....	8.80	11.20	13.20
Men			
20-34 years.....	12.80	16.00	19.70
35-54 years.....	11.90	14.80	17.80
55 years and over.....	10.40	13.30	15.90
Children			
1-2 years.....	6.30	7.80	9.30
3-5 years.....	7.60	9.60	11.30
6-8 years.....	9.40	11.70	14.40
9-11 years.....	11.00	13.80	16.40
Girls 12-19 years.....	11.80	14.90	17.50
Boys 12-19 years.....	13.90	17.60	20.80

* Food cost for any family can be figured by totaling costs shown in table for individuals of sex and age of various members of the family as follows:

- o For those eating all meals at home (or carrying some meals from home), use amounts shown.
- o For those eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent from amount in table for each meal not eaten at home. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent or one-fourth the cost shown.
- o For guests, include for each meal eaten, 5 percent of amount shown in table for the proper age group.

Next, adjust the total figure if more or fewer than four people generally eat at the family table. Costs shown are for individuals in 4-person families. Adjustment is necessary because larger families tend to buy and use foods more economically than smaller ones. Thus, for a 1-person family, add 20 percent; 2 persons, add 10 percent; 3, add 5 percent; 4, use as is; 5, subtract 5 percent; 6 or more, subtract 10 percent.

NOTE: Additional information for the MEDIA and photographs (when applicable) may be obtained from: Shirley Wagener, Editor of Food and Home Notes, Room 535A, Office of Communication/Press Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Or phone 202-447-5898.